

LANTERN SUMMER 1982

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* INTRODUCTION

Once again we are late with publication! I'M not sure why this time, so from now on I'M not going to announce in advance that the next edition of LANTERN will be out by so and so date. Instead I'll simply say that you can expect each edition to come out roughly 3 months after the last one (give or take a week or so) and that the 4 issues published each year will coincide roughly with the seasons!

In our Spring issue Mike Burgess took a close look at the stories told in Sampson's book Ghosts of the Broad. In this issue Mike continues with his study of these tales by taking a close look at one particular story, probably the most famous and well known to Sampson's tales, namely that of the phantom wherry MAYFLY.

The rest of this issue is taken up with all our usual features, plus a pot

pourri of press snippets which have been building up in our files over the past few months.

Thanks are extended to everyone who has contributed material to LANTERN over the months - keep the stuff coming in so that we can keep the contents of LANTERN as diverse as possible.

Finally, it is not without some sadness that we have to report the demise of that excellent earth mysteries mag ESSEX LANDSCAPE MYSTERIES which was very ably produced and edited by Jim Kimmis. Jim has decided to wind-up ELM because, as he puts it himself, "...ELM is failing its original intentions, which were to encompass a broadly-based study of the Essex landscape beyond the present limits of 'earth mysteries' research..." Jim also says that he feels that the time he has to spend on producing ELM is now disproportionate to the value of the magazine. It is sad to see such a good magazine finish, but it's good to have someone being realistic.

East Anglian HAUNTS N°3: NORWICH



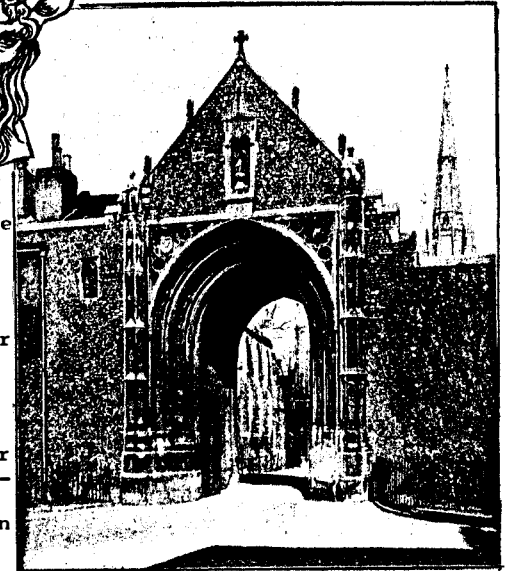
The following ghost story was discovered pasted in the back of an old magazine dated 1736. The story bore the title "A Strange Occurrence" and it was told in the book Recollections of Norwich 50 Years Ago (F.T. Hibgate, 1919). There is little doubt that the very old inn mentioned is the 'Maids Head' (which earlier this year was presented with a scroll proclaiming it to be the oldest hotel in the UK - having been in continuous business for 710 years!).

"Business chanced to take me many years ago to the ancient city of Norwich. Arriving there by coach from London, I layed that night at a very old inn, situated in a street called, if my memory serves me right, Maudlin-street (Magdalen). The room I occupied was a very old-fashioned one, having two steps to lead down into it, and the walls covered with panels. Over the fireplace was a portrait, I imagine painted on the wall itself, of a very pale man with black hair, habited in some sort of ecclesiastical garb, and bearing the look of a Jesuit or Romish priest. There was something about this picture that affected me very strongly, and caused me to think of it many times during the night. Next morning I asked the landlord whose portrait it might be, and he could not enlighten me, though he said he had oft been asked the same question...."

The afternoon before I was to take the coach to London I was walking near one of the great gates, which led to the cathedral, when I suddenly observed a man clothed like a clergyman standing in the angle of a wall directly in front of me. Owing to the dusk I could not see him well until I was close up against him. Then I saw him perfectly clearly, and to my horror his face was terribly swollen, and a rope was drawn tight round his neck. Protruding from his breast was a knife, such as was formerly used by executioners for dismembering the bodies of criminals. All the while I was observing him so closely I could not think why his lineaments seemed so familiar to me, and then there suddenly flashed across my mind the portrait in my bedchamber at the inn. The man was the very image of the one depicted over the fireplace. For some moments I gazed with the utmost horror, not unmixed with fear, at this awful sight. Then I heard a kind of deep sigh - a groan - and he disappeared. I returned to my inn, and the longer I looked at the portrait the more certain I was that it represented the man I had seen in the street. Inquiring of the landlord if there was a Romish priest in the city, he told me there was, and one much noted for his great learning. To him, therefore I went the next morning early, as the coach left at nine, but I found him in his chapel, having just finished reading his Mass. Telling him my strange adventure, he took me into his house and showed me a portrait of the same man. On my inquiring who it might be, he replied:- "The Rev. Thomas Tunstal, a priest, who was executed for the Catholic Faith in 1616 at the gates of the very street in which your inn is situated." I then took him to the inn, and he at once recognised the portrait as that of Father Tunstal: though why I should have apparently seen his apparition, neither he nor I could form any idea."

tic. So, where ever your researches take you in the future Jim, the best of luck from LANTERN and its readers.

MWBunn



ERPINGHAM GATE, NORWICH CATHEDRAL.
PROBABLY THE 'GREAT GATE' WHERE THE GUESOM APPARITION WAS SEEN.

No.90: GHOSTS - All the following are at Wissett in Suffolk:- Black Shuck haunts a bridge over a stream in Mill Road; near another bridge in the same road is a place called 'King's Danger'. A bare patch where nothing grows is said to mark the spot where a man once committed suicide; sounds as if of heavy chains being dragged once heard upstairs in Bleach Farm; a pond near Halleluja Cottage haunted by phantom horse and cart that once careered into it; Grey's Lane is where a Mr. Grey hanged himself, and his ghost wings from a tree here on certain nights; Paradise Cottage is haunted by a 'Grey Lady' who vanishes into a nearby pond; a female ghost perches on a bridge at Cole's Arch on the Rumburgh Road.

All the above from East Anglian Magazine, July 1982 (Vol.41, No.9), pp 392/4.

No.91: FORTIANA - "John Ripper of Swaffham (Norfolk), when a boy in about 1882, witnessed a 'rain of frogs' whilst caught in a storm in Westacre Road. From: Ribbons from the Pedlar's Pack, (1972) p.152.

No.92: TRADITION - The five-tiered tower of Burgh St Peter Church, Norfolk, used to be said to close up like a telescope at the close of the yachting season, and open again as soon as the first mast appeared. From: Waveney, (1924) p.152 and other sources.

No.93: GHOST - That Victorian bogey 'Spring-heeled Jack' is said to haunt the road between Attleborough and Shropham, Norfolk. At dusk, he leaps six feet into the air out of a field and bounds away down the road like a kangaroo. East Anglian Magazine, Feb. 1947 (Vol.6, No.6) p.304.

No.94: Fortiana - An odd death from the Ketteringham, Norfolk, parish registers of 1609; "Henry Clayborne who tied his wrist with the hayre of a cove was killed by the said cove 6th July and buried the 7th".

No.95: WITCHERY - In 1521 the Mayor and Aldermen of Norwich investigated the doings of William Smith and two associates in connection with the extortion of money from several people for hill-digging. George Dowsing had "reised a spirett or ij in a glass" while a priest "held the glasse in his hande. According to one witness "Dowsing dede areyse in a glasse a litill thing of the length of an ynche or ther about, but whether it was a spirett or a shadowe he can not tell, but the said George said it was a spirett". Norwich Archaeology, I, (1847), 50 - 57.

Notes and Queries



THE 'MAYFLY' MYTH

BY

M.W. Burgess

In my article in LANTERN 37, I gave a brief outline of my investigations into the 1931 book 'Ghosts of the Broad' by Charles Sampson. My conclusion was that 90% of the stories therein were wholly fictitious, and that Sampson had perpetrated a hoax which has lasted for over 50 years. Now, I would like to concentrate in greater detail on just one of those stories; a story which has endured and apparently become firmly lodged in our local folklore - the legend of the phantom wherry 'Mayfly'.

(For those who don't know, wherries were sailing craft somewhat similar to long, low barges, but with a single huge sail and very shallow draft that made them perfect for carrying cargoes on the rivers and Broad of Norfolk in the 19th century).

First of all, the characters who appear in Sampson's story:

Mr. Dormey, one of the owners of the wherry 'Mayfly' at Beccles in Suffolk.

Millicent, his lovely young daughter, rather innocent and trusting.

'Blood' Stevenson, skipper of the 'Mayfly', a 45 year old bruiser of a man who had fought his way through the ports of the world.

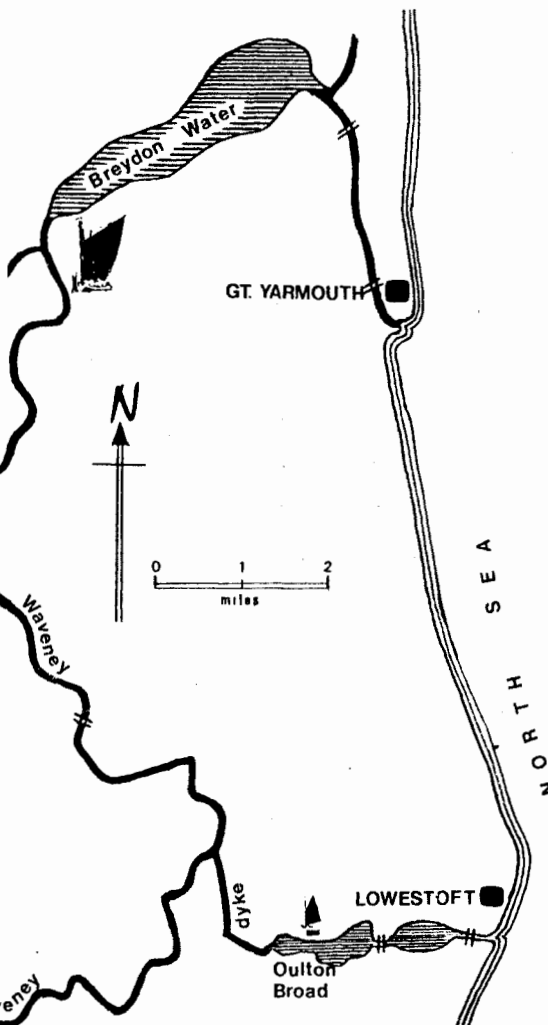
George, a crewman, of the same ilk as the skipper.

Jack, the mate, a god-fearing man.

Bert Entwistle, a sturdy 17 year old lad who acts as cabin-boy and general factotum of the whole ship.

Sampson's account begins thus: One day in 1851, the owners of the 'Mayfly' charge Stevenson with delivering a chest containing £400,000 to their bank in Great Yarmouth, deeming the usual road route to be too hazardous for such a large sum. To disarm any suspicions, young Millicent was to go along as a passenger, ostensibly to stay with her 'aunt' in Yarmouth, and an empty wagon would be sent by road as a decoy. The evil Stevenson immediately begins scheming to avail himself of both the gold, and Miss Millicent, to whom he has taken a fancy. The girl herself sees the trip as something of an adventure, and secretly likes the prospect of sailing with Stevenson, whom she sees as a somewhat manly, romantic figure.

The 'Mayfly' sails on a night in June and heads downstream along the river Waveney, but when they reach the entrance to Breydon Water, Stevenson secretly throws Jack overboard, because the mate is hor-



but he presses her, and reveals that she has no choice in the matter, since he is the master and can marry whom he pleases. In any case, he tells her, the ship and the gold and everything aboard, including herself, now belonged to him, for he was stealing the whole lot and leaving England for ever. Amid screams and protests, he carries her down to his cabin, and cries come from below during the night. Bert is at the wheel when Millicent emerges from the cabin bleeding from a neck wound, clad only in her nightdress. Stevenson pursues her in a drunken rage across the deck. Now George, bruiser though he be, has an attack of conscience and rushes to the girl's aid, but Stevenson simply knocks him out and hurls him over the side. Bert too comes forward, but just then Millicent produces a knife

ified at his captain's mad scheme. They sail on out of Yarmouth harbour and into the turbulent North Sea, making about seven knots with a stiff breeze behind them. The motion of the ship disturbs Millicent, who knows full well that wherries are not meant for sea voyages, but Stevenson manages to allay her fears with glib lies, and they sail on for two days more. By this time they have navigated the Channel and are out into the Atlantic Ocean, and both Bert and the girl are seaisick, and Millicent rather fancies going home.

However, Stevenson suddenly asks her to marry him, which comes as something of a shock. She professes not to understand,

from somewhere and stabs the skipper through the heart. He falls, and a moment later she too collapses to the deck, lifeless.

The shocked Bert is unable to steer the ship on his own, so he lashes the wheel and drinks himself into a heavy sleep. Next morning he casts himself off in the ship's dinghy, and drifts away into a thick sea mist. That night the 'Mayfly' reappears in the distance, glowing all over with an eerie white phosphorescence, and rushes by him with no sound but the creak of timbers. As it passes, Bert sees the pursuit and the deaths re-enacted on deck by two figures all in white. Sails full, the ghostly vessel vanishes into the windless night, leaving behind it a foul, sulphurous reek. Bert faints.

He is rescued by a passing boat and taken to a hospital in Devon, where he slowly recovers and sends for Mr. Dormey to fetch him.

Three years later, Bert and Dormey are fishing in a dinghy on Oulton Broad one night when they see the glowing 'Mayfly' rushing toward them from Oulton Dyke. Again the deaths are played out, with a skeleton at the wheel, and as the girl falls she cries out: "Father, save me!" The ship then careers several times around the Broad at great speed, and vanishes again up the Dyke, leaving the foul stench in its wild wake. Bert realises that this is June 24th and the third anniversary of the tragic deaths on that Midsummer day. He turns, only to find Mr. Dormey lying dead in the bottom of the dinghy.

Thus, we have the legend that, every year at about 12.30 am on June 24th, the phantom wherry 'Mayfly' sails down Oulton Dyke and into the Broad, foul murder being re-enacted upon its decks as it races around, passing even through moored vessels in an effort to find a berth. But this it can never do, since the 'Mayfly' is now a hell-ship of the 'Devil's Navy', and is doomed to travel forever without ceasing. And those who see her always learn of a death soon after.

That is the story as told in 'Ghosts of the Broads', or at least the outline of it. But there are various irregularities in Sampson's tale that have to be accounted for, and many things that have to be explained. At the very beginning of the chapter Sampson says that the 'Mayfly's voyage begins "on a dark September evening". But how do we reconcile this with the rest of the story, which takes place in June? Indeed, the whole time-scale of the voyage needs to be examined, and below is my reconstruction of it, based solely on Sampson's account:

(June 21st), after 10.30pm: 'Mayfly' departs quay at Beccles; she sails down the Waveney, into the Yare, and out into the North Sea.

(June 22nd), morning: 'Mayfly' nearer Holland than England; passes through Channel, out into the Atlantic.

(June 23rd), before midnight: Stevenson takes Millicent to his cabin.

(June 24th), early hours: George thrown overboard, Stevenson and Millicent die; Bert lashes the wheel.

(June 25th), morning: Bert casts off in dinghy.

(June 25th), night: Ghostly 'Mayfly' reappears to Bert, who faints.

Now, distances also have to be taken into account here. First of all, Sampson says that the 'Mayfly' could run the 15 miles between Beccles and Yarmouth faster than any other wherry. But the distance from Beccles bridge to Yarmouth bridge is actually 22 miles by river, not 15. Vagueness of description makes other distances hard to determine; for example, by the end of the first full day's sailing, the 'Mayfly' had gone down the Channel and "out on to...the broad Atlantic". But where exactly? I have assumed that the Atlantic Ocean begins at a straight line drawn between the Scilly Isles and the Ile d'Ouessant, and taking the vagaries of the voyage into account, I make the distance between this line and Beccles bridge to be approximately 434 nautical miles. Now, allowing the maximum of about 2½ hours permissible in the time-scale, the 'Mayfly' would thus need to maintain a constant speed of approx. 17 knots to cover this distance. So, just how fast were wherries able to travel? The only figure given in the story is "about 7 knots", but this is patently useless. I have it on very good authority (1) that the absolute maximum speed for any wherry, given ideal water conditions and a very strong tail-wind, was about 9 knots. So the actual mechanics of the 'Mayfly's voyage are utterly impossible! Indeed, they are doubly so, since wherries were purpose-built river craft, and under no circumstances could have survived such a journey.

What of other 'facts' given in Sampson's story? First of all, there are the characters themselves. Checking the local trade directories of that period, and the Beccles census returns for 1851, I can find no-one named either Dormey or Entwistle, and the only Stevenson (here spelt 'Stephenson') is a 33 year old farm labourer. Tracing the Yarmouth bank records would be a tiring and probably unrewarding task, as there were 5 in the town at that time. To say that the alleged cargo of £400,000 was

a trifle excessive is something of an understatement, since that amount would now be equivalent to over £4½ million!

One slight inconsistency concerns the status of Mr. Dormey himself. The story begins by speaking of "the firm" that owned 'Mayfly', and "the owners"; but a further three times, Dormey is called "the owner", and both Jack and Bert call him "his employer", and in Bert's case, "his master". But this is a moot point really, since Mr. Dormey didn't even exist.

Again, the actual crew of the 'Mayfly' - skipper, mate, crewman, cabin-boy - does not tally with what we know of the trading wherries of the past. Most sailed with only a crew of two (sometimes the skipper and his wife), but many were worked by only one man. A crew of four was unheard of.

Next we come to the matter of the hospital in Devon to which Bert was taken after his rescue. This is named in the story as the 'Devon and Cornwall General Hospital' at Plymouth. But was there such a place in the Plymouth area at that period? An enquiry to the Area Librarian (2) elicited the response that "it seems fairly certain that no such hospital existed". However, he added further that the hospital's correct title was the 'South Devon and East Cornwall' at that time, but that a local directory had transmuted this to the 'Devon and Cornwall'. This was in Sussex Place, Plymouth. So it seems that Sampson may have been using an incorrect but local name for the hospital.

At the end of the story, Sampson refers to the later appearances of the ghostly wherry, and makes mention of two societies which had supposedly investigated the phenomenon. He names these as the 'International Society of Metaphysics', and the 'British Psychical Phenomena Association'. My researches, however, show that neither of these bodies ever existed. "This year" (presumably 1931), says Sampson, 'Professor Erst, of Munich', and 'Dr. Paolo Sevrini, from Rome', would be coming to investigate the apparition further. And once again, I find that both of these learned men are figments of Sampson's imagination.

And as for the 'Mayfly' itself? Well, despite intensive searching of the records, I can find no trace of any wherry ever being named 'Mayfly'. But I'll come back to that.

For the moment, my findings can be summarised thus: neither the wherry, its owners, nor any of the characters involved ever existed; the actual voyage of the 'Mayfly' was physically impossible; and none of Sampson's corroborative witnesses



LEFT

The late Bill Solomon - one time harbour-master at Oulton Broad + + + + Was he perpetrator of the myth of the 'Mayfly', or did he unwittingly keep a much older story alive?

existed. So much for the 'facts'.

Now we must consider the story's history, and the various versions and retellings of it over the years. After Sampson, the first mention of the tale I can find is by A.E. Regis in 1950 (3), where he simply tells exactly the same story. Then in 1951, James Wentworth Day (4) went into print with a subtly different version, which he claimed to have been told by Mr. Bill Solomon, the former assistant harbour master at Lowestoft. In this, the main differences are as follows:

1) The action takes place in 1840, not in 1851. 2) The 'Mayfly' was to sail from Oulton to Norwich, not Beccles to Yarmouth. 3) The cargo was simply "a great deal of money". 4) Apart from the girl (unnamed), only the skipper, a cabin-boy and the mate were aboard. 5) The murder of the mate occurred "off the mouth of the English Channel". 6) There is no mention of the deaths of either girl or skipper. 7) It was one year later, not three, that the ghostly wherry reappeared and the owner dropped dead. It should be noted that Day's version makes even less sense than Sampson's! Then in 1972 (5), Bill Soloan himself made a statement that he had taken the story from 'a book' and "varies it a bit". But the version he then gave was exactly the same as Charles Sampson's!

In 1961, the wherry expert Roy Clark wrote a book (6) in which he gave a variant of the legend, but without any details as to names or dates. His tale of the 'Phantom Wherry' takes place "once upon a time", and

Clark states that he got it "from hearsay and gossip". Here is Clark's story:

Once upon a time there was a wherryman who carried wheat from Lowestoft and Yarmouth to Beccles, always calling at the same mill. He developed an unhealthy lust for the miller's lovely young daughter, who accepted an invitation to sail with him on one of his trips. They sailed one summer afternoon, but as they reached Yarmouth, the wherryman attacked the girl, stripping her of her clothes. She broke free and rushed on to the deck, managing to grab a knife as she went. Again the brute assailed her, and she stabbed him through the heart. As he fell over the side, she fainted. When she came to she found that the wherry was out on the open sea. People on the shore saw the ship disappear over the horizon, followed swiftly by a brief flash of flame leaping upward. Ever since that time, the ghostly, glowing form of the wherry has been seen sailing down the Waveney on the anniversary of the tragedy.

Now this seems to be both Sampson's and Day's accounts stripped down to the bare essentials, and I wonder if this could not be the true origin of the tale. Wherries after all were common and romantic sights on local waterways in the last century, and it would not be at all surprising to find that the memory of one had survived in a sort of 'Flying Dutchman' legend. I performed a similar investigation into Day's version and found, as I expected, that none of the 'facts' given were accurate.

In Clark's book, he gives a list of the wherries that operated locally, and there we find this reference:
"Mayflower. Tons burden-30. Date built-Where owned-Bungay. Last owner-W.D. and A.E. Walker. Last skipper-. Reputed to be the phantom wherry".

On what authority he makes this last statement, I do not know. I would have liked to contact Mr. Clark, but he now lives in Canada, and his exact whereabouts are unknown. I am thus forced to assume that either Clark himself latched on to this name as the nearest available equivalent to Sampson's 'Mayfly', previously being aware of 'Ghosts of the Broads', or that Sampson's tale had filtered into local knowledge and the corrupted name came to Clark via his "hearsay and gossip". No dates are given for the building or last ownership of the 'Mayflower', but W.D. and A.E. Walker were certainly operating in Bungay (note, not Beccles) between 1840 and 1860. In Beccles at this time there was only the London and Beccles Shipping Co., whose agents were W.H. Leavould and William Darby, and whose wherries sailed to Yarmouth and Bungay daily, and to Norwich occasionally.

But we are left with this basic problem: is Clark's tale a corrupted and watered-down version of Sampson's account, or is it the original legend of an unnamed wherry that, at some unknown time in the past, was reputed to have had a death on board, which now sails an unspecified stretch of the river Waveney at an unstated time each year, and which Sampson heard and put into his 1931 book? It seems likely that we shall never know. Certainly, there is no record of this tale dating from before 'Ghosts of the Broads' was published, and some later authors eg. Coxo (7) and Alexander (8) have done no more than to take Sampson's word as 'Gospel'. But whatever the answer may be, there is no doubt at all that, as it stands, Charles Sampson's tale of the wherry 'Mayfly' is sheer fiction, like so many more of his 'ghost stories'.

For help in my research, I would like to thank the following: Ms. E.O. Keefe, Society for Psychical Research; Mr. J.R. Elliott, Plymouth Library; Mr. E.W. Butler; Mr. C. Wilkins-Jones, Norwich Library; Mr. D. Anderson, Norfolk Wherry Trust.

REFERENCES:

- 1) Personal communication from Mr. D. Anderson, secretary of the Norfolk Wherry Trust, 9/1/82.
- 2) Personal communication from Mr. J.R. Elliott, Area Librarian, Plymouth, 25/2/82.
- 3) A. E. Regis, in 'East Anglian Magazine', April 1950.
- 4) J.W. Day, 'Broadland Adventure'; Country Life Ltd., 1951.
- 5) 'Eastern Evening News', 23/6/72.
- 6) R. Clark, 'Black-Sailed Traders'; Putnam & Co. Ltd., 1961.
- 7) A.D.H. Coxo, 'Haunted Britain'; Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1973.
- 8) M. Alexander, 'Phantom Britain'; Frederick Muller Ltd., 1975.

Other works of help to me were:

- Boyes, J. & Russell, R. 'The Canals of Eastern England', 1977.
Bray, D. 'The Story of the Norfolk Wherries', no date.
Malster, R. 'Wherries and Waterways', 1971; and Kelly's and White's Directories of Norfolk & Suffolk.



NEW MAGAZINE REVIEW.

EARTH GIANT (A Journal of Wessex Mysteries & Antiquities). Quarterly. A5. FAXIL printed. Sub. £2 per year, or 50p per single copy, from:
J.M. Harte and V. Russett, 35A West Street, Abbotsbury, near Weymouth, Dorset.

PICWINNARD vanished quite suddenly and mysteriously from the Earth Mysteries scene about three years ago, and since then there has been total silence from the West Country. Now, however, Jeremy Harte and Vince Russett have bounced back with issue No. 1 of PICWINNARD's successor, EARTH GIANT. I always thought of PW as a sort of 'sister' magazine to LANTERN, and was very sorry to learn of its demise. EARTH GIANT aims to appeal not only to the geomantic fraternity, but also to 'serious' archaeologists and folklorists, and it bears promise. Something seems missing though - something that, with all deference to Mr. Harte, I can only call the 'Russett touch'. Vince's subtle mocking humour and objective wit are not really in evidence in No. 1, which seems rather 'serious' in tone (that's an observation, not necessarily a criticism). Printing is by the TLH team, and some of the illustrations are prettyropy - including one on p. 15 that's totally blank - but I expect this will improve with time. No. 1 includes articles on Church Grotesques, Wessex Troytowns, the enigmatic St. Wite of Dorset, and a (rather unlikely) interview with a chap who says he saw a ghost in a Dorchester pub. All this, plus news, reviews, notes & queries, and an unsigned 'opinion column' about the "comfortable myth" of The Golden Age, with which I agree entirely. An eminently sensible, ordered and interesting first issue. PICWINNARD is dead; long live EARTH GIANT!

NEW BOOKS

Janet and Colin Bord seem to have been even busier than usual lately and have had two books published in the last couple of months. The first being EARTH RITES which, according to the sleeve notes "...examines the ways in which our ancestors channelled the earth's creative energies to benefit all life on this planet, and stress the need to renew the essential harmony between man and earth before it is too late". The book concentrates on the customs and artefacts of Britain; with a particular emphasis on the apparent remains of ancient fertility rites, vestiges of which are still with us today. Really, I am the wrong person to review this book because much of what the Bords write are echoes of my own ideas (in fact, I wish I had written this book!). Much of what the Bords have to say will no doubt be dismissed by some of the more 'progressive' of present day earth mystery exponents as being 'old-fashioned'.

Nevertheless, the theories and ideas which are presented in this book are, to my mind, as good as any (and better than a lot). Whether you agree or disagree with the theoretical side of this book, one thing that no thinking person can disagree with is the authors' appeal for a rethink of mankind's attitude towards Nature, and in particular a return to a natural, balanced life and a return to our empathy with the planet Earth which we have lost, an empathy which our ancestors were all too aware of. No serious student of earth mysteries should be without this book, if you haven't got a copy yet - go out and get one as soon as possible. Recommended!

The other book is entitled THE BIGFOOT CASEBOOK, being an in-depth, factual study of north-American creature of that name. Although

(Continued on p. 10)



This ancient pottery jug, untouched by barnacles or weed, and in virtually mint condition apart from the broken neck, spilled out on deck along with a good catch of plaice when the Lowestoft trawler Ripley Queen was fishing 200 miles out in the North Sea. Mr. Bernard Norman, deckie/cook on Talisman Trawlers' Ripley Queen, who brought the jug along to the Journal office, reports that it came up from the depths completely clean of marine growths. Thought to be around 200 years old, the trawler's unusual catch is a Bellarmine jug, one of thousands made over the years bearing the face of Cardinal Bellarmine, a learned prelate of the 16th century.

LOWESTOFT JOURNAL 26/3/82



'STONEPIX' NO.3 HARTEST, SUFFOLK

Grid Ref: TM(155)834525.

- THE HARTEST STONE, a boulder of limestone roughly oval in shape, and about five feet long, stands at the north end of the raised green in the centre of Hartest. The village itself is almost hidden from the outside world in a deep dale between green slopes formed by the confluence of two streams in the high Suffolk lands south, south west of

Bury st. Edmunds.

There are various tales told about this stone, each one very similar, and all may ultimately stem from some more prosaic original. For instance, an informant, who was first told the story back in the 1930s, says that the boulder was "dragged from the top of a neighbouring hill on a sledge by 'twenty gentlemen and twenty farmers' to celebrate the Peace of Utrecht in 1713". Then again, it is told how the rock was removed from a field "near Somerton Common" and dragged on a sledge by 40 horses (with a trumpeter mounted on top of the stone) to the green on July 7, 1713, to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough's victories in the War of Spanish Succession.

Another variant claims it to have been taken from High Field, Somerton, on a sledge drawn by forty-five horses, on August 1st, 1714, when King George 1 took the throne. The final example of this type of tale comes from about 1868, when a local man wrote that the Hartest Stone "...was brought to light over a century ago in a clay pit at the top of Hartest Hill...and was removed thence by a Mr. Carter, who resided near to it, and in whose field it was found. He had it conveyed on a strong sleigh or dray to its present resting-place, and set it on its point, several small stones being placed around it to keep it from rolling over..." The boulder has obviously fallen upon its side since then, for he added that it "...formerly had even more the appearance of a logan (Rocking) stone than it has at present..."

Note that in the last version there is no mention of trumpeters, processions of 'gentlemen and farmers', or indeed any specific reason for the stone's removal. It is probably closer to the truth than any of the others. The original informant also claimed that, after the stone's removal, there came about what he termed an 'erotic debauch' - an added detail almost identical to that told of a larger stone at Merton in Norfolk, only in that case the attempt at removal failed.



NEW BOOKS continued: not my own particular field I found this book fascinating. It is divided into two parts. The first being extracts from eyewitness reports from pre 1900 to date. The second part is a chronological list of bigfoot sightings from 1818 to date - a very comprehensive list, indeed. With numerous fascinating photographs and drawings, this book is a must for 'bigfoot' buffs. EARTH RITES and BIGFOOT CASE-BOOK are both published by Granada, both sell at £8.95.

From the prolific pen of Nigel Pennick comes HITLER'S SECRET SCIENCES (Neville Spearman, £6.50). Sub titled 'His quest for the hidden knowledge of the Ancients', this book describes the startling and bizarre theories of alternative science that were elevated to official status in Hitler's Germany. Pennick has used many forgotten documents and material never before published in English, to describe both by word and picture the Nazis attempts to create a new religion - and prepare for the emergence of a new super-race. IAWB

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OSEAP RESOURCES CENTRE UPDATE also published twice yearly. Joint annual subscription to the above is £5.00 in the UK (£6.00 for overseas by IMO) Full details from: OSEAP, 170 Henry Street, Crew, Cheshire, CW1 4BQ.

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THE LEY HUNTER: U.K.'s leading journal of Earth Mysteries. UK SUB (4 issues) £3.60; Europe, £4.50; Overseas: \$12.50. From PO Box 13, Welshpool, Powys, Wales.

BROAD SPECTRUM: Quarterly mag (incorporating 5 others) devoted to Magical trads, unusual phenomena. Annual sub. £1.85, single copies 50p. from Hamilton House, Coop Street, Blackpool, Lancs. FY1 5AJ.

FROM THE NEWS OF THE WORLD July 4, 1982.

Two wives have told of their terror while living in the house on the hill. For they are convinced it is haunted. Last week the latest tenants, Jacqueline and Phil Clapham, fled after ghostly foot steps had begun to follow Jackie round her home. The house is on BARROW HILL, ACTON, near SUDBURY, Suffolk. And when news of Mrs Clapham's 'ghost' spread, neighbour Mrs Barbara Cook told how she spent 4 years of terror in the same house. "I used to hear footsteps tapping around the place. It was eerie," Said Mrs Cook, 31. "They started when we began decorating the place. And Mrs Clapham first noticed the happenings when she decorated." She said, "It's as though something there doesn't like the place being changed." Mrs Clapham, 20...said, "I'd never go back there. It was terrible. Our little boy was terrified. She and her husband Phil, 26, a lorry driver, moved into the house on the hill in April.

"We started decorating the kitchen and things began to happen," said Mrs Clapham. "Door handles would turn but there was no one there. Doors would open on their own, then stick shut. It was as though someone was on the other side, pulling against me." "Things got so bad I used to leave when Phil went to work and take Paul for long walks. I've never believed in ghosts but now I'm not sure." (Credit: Paul Screeton)

FORTEAN TIMES: Quarterly journal of news, notes, reviews and references on current and historical strange phenomena, related subjects & philosophies. Annual Sub:- £4/\$10 from BM Fortean Times, London, WC1N 3XX.

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THE CAULDRON: Pagan journal of the Old Religion. 4 issues £1.20; 7 issues £2. (blank FOs or cash) From BCM Box 1633, London, WC1N 3XX

under: there are legends of a Cornish giant named 'Blunderbore'; he was of course the evil ogre in the original 'Jack the Giant-killer' tales.

Michael W. Burgess.



Nothing unusual in Spur dogfish are that, but when Mr. members of the shark Hutter gutted the family and are sold in female fish on the fish shops under the beach he found this names of huss, rock two-headed youngster salmon and rock inside.

Mr. Hutter, who is retired, lives at 122, Long Lane, Corton.

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